

June 2015

IN THIS EDITION



Mark your calendar for July 3 celebration. See page 3.



Public Works selects its employee of the year. See page 4.

TOWN HALL CALENDAR

June 16: Town Council regular meeting (7 p.m.)

June 30: Town Council work session (6 p.m.)

July 6: TOWN HALL CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY

July 7: Town Council regular meeting (7 p.m.)

Meetings are in the Council Chambers in building B at Town Hall, 900 Seventh Ave. Town Council regular meetings are recorded and broadcast (not live) on GTVII (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).



Follow us on Twitter (@TownofGarner), Facebook (facebook.com/townofgarner), YouTube (youtube.com/townofgarner) and now Instagram (instagram.com/townofgarner).

GARNER UPDATE

Vol. 78, No. 84



Spare Change returns to the Garner Performing Arts Center back lawn to headline the Downtown Sounds festival on Sunday, June 7.

Downtown to Rock Out with Live Music and Food Trucks

One of Garner's premier outdoor events of the year is taking place on the back lawn of Garner Performing Arts Center (742 W. Garner Road) **Sunday, June 7** from noon to 6 p.m. The Garner Revitalization Association's Downtown Sounds concert series has morphed into a one-day music festival with local food trucks and craft beer. Admission and parking are free.

The food trucks will be Ty's All Natural, The Humble Pig, Stuft, King's Authentic Philly Cheesesteaks, CJ's Street Food, D'Burritos, Dusty Donuts and Jam Ice Cream. (Twitter is a great way

to follow these trucks and get updates on this event!) Double Barley Brewing and Nicklepoint Brewing Co. also will be on hand.

Here's the music lineup:

Noon-1:30: Nick Driver (singer/songwriter) – nickdrivermusic.com
2-3:30: Jonathan Byrd and the Pickup Cowboy Band (Americana) – jonathanbyrd.com

4-6: Spare Change – sparechange-music.net

For updates and more information on GRA, go to downtowngarner.com.



Downtown Garner is now on Instagram. (downtown-garner).



A Message from the Mayor



Watch the mayor's award-winning "Great People in Garner" on demand at youtube.com/townofgarner.

Things are heating up in Garner—in a good way. There are several exciting events happening in the next few weeks, and they're all pretty much free.



I hope you will take the time to come downtown to the back lawn of Garner Performing Arts Center on Sunday, June 7 for the Downtown Sounds festival with live music and food trucks. This promises to be one of the best outdoor events of the year in Garner.

The next weekend we'll have the grand opening for the North Garner Dog Park. That's a project that was made possible by Parks and Recreational Bonds that citizens approved in March 2013.

There are also great, family-friendly events coming up at Lake Benson Park. The next Friday Family Flick is June 12, and there's a camping option with that event too. Then on July 3, we have what has been Garner's signature special event for many years—our Independence Day celebration with fireworks and the North Carolina Symphony. It's a sensational way to

mark our great nation's birth.

Changing gears, I want to urge each of you to consider nominating a fellow citizen for the James R. Stevens Service to Garner Award. Almost all of us know at least one person who has made enormously important contributions to the life of our All-America City. You can nominate one of these people. Learn more about the process by reading the article below.

Ronnie S. Williams

Ronnie S. Williams

Town Hires New HR Director

B.D. Sechler took over as the Town's human resources director on June 1. Sechler has 21 years of experience in human resources at six different private-sector employers. He has worked as an HR professional in various roles for Data General, Fairlane Motor Credit, IIS, Nortel, Visiting International Fellows (VIF) and Qimonda.



Sechler's educational credentials include a master's degree in labor and industrial relations and bachelor's degree in business, both from Michigan State University.

Sechler was selected as the top candidate after an extensive two-day assessment center with seven semi-finalists—designed and facilitated by Developmental Associates, LLC—and after completing a second panel interview round for three finalists.

Nominate Someone Now for Citizen Service Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2015 James R. Stevens Service to Garner Award and will be accepted through July 10.

Anyone who has made substantial, outstanding contributions to the Town of Garner over a significant period of years is eligible for the award, now in its 28th year. Emphasis should be placed on service rendered over an extended period of time rather than just what has been done in the preceding 12 months. Preference will be given to nominees with 20-plus years of service, in keeping with James Stevens' tradition of service spanning decades.

Non-residents of Garner are eligible if the award committee deems that they meet the necessary criteria. The award also can be awarded posthumously.

The winner will be selected by a panel of judges that includes Town

officials, a Garner Chamber of Commerce representative, a Stevens family member or descendant and other members of the community. An award ceremony will be held to honor the 2015 recipient at the Aug. 18 Town Council meeting.

The recipient will receive an engraved plaque, and an engraved plate bearing his or her name will be added to the plaque honoring previous winners that currently is displayed at Town Hall.

Nomination forms can be found at Town Hall or the garnernc.gov website under Forms, the Garner Chamber of Commerce, the Wake County Southeast Regional Library, Garner Performing Arts Center and other select locations around town.

A form can also be requested by emailing Stella Gibson, deputy town clerk for the Town, at sgibson@garnernc.gov or by phoning her at (919) 773-4456.



TOWN OF GARNER BOND PROGRAM

Town Plans Pair of June Events to Mark Opening of Dog Park

The Town of Garner has two events lined up to officially unveil the North Garner Dog Park, a Garner Bond Program project located at 221 E. Garner Road (at the entrance to Garner Recreational Park).

There will be a formal ribbon cutting **Tuesday, June 9** at 10 a.m. Town officials and a representative from the volunteer Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will make brief remarks.

Then on **Saturday, June 13**, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department will hold the grand opening for the park from 9 a.m. to noon. That event will feature a rabies clinic for dogs co-sponsored by the SPCA of Wake County and the Garner Police Department. One- and three-year vaccinations will be available for \$10 (cash only). The event will also include pet registrations, hot dog and other vendors, and goodies for dogs and their human companions.

North Garner Dog Park was built



The North Garner Dog Park was built with voter-approved bonds.

with funds from the Parks and Recreational Bonds approved by Garner citizens with 70 percent of the vote in a special election held in March 2013. A second dog park, also to be funded with Parks and Recreational Bonds, is being planned for South Garner. Details have yet to be finalized.

North Garner Dog Park is open 8 a.m. to dark seven days a week.

For more information, please contact the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department at (919) 774-4442.



Friday Family Flick Slated for June 12 at Park

Enjoy "SpongeBob: Sponge Out of Water," a free family-friendly movie showing, at beautiful Lake Benson Park (921 Buffalo Road) on **Friday, June 12** starting at 8:30 p.m. You can bring your own food or purchase concessions.

Families can also bring a tent and gear and camp overnight for a fee (\$12 per family for Garner residents, \$15 per family for non-residents). Pre-registration for camping is required and can be done online at garnernc.gov. The rain location for the movie is Avery Street Recreation Center (125 Avery St.).



Garner PRCR is now on Twitter (@GarnerPRCR).

Celebrate the Birth of Our Nation!

It's almost time for Garner's signature event, the Independence Day celebration on **July 3** at Lake Benson Park (921 Benson Road). Gates open at 5 p.m. for this free event, which features a concert by the North Carolina Symphony and one of the best fireworks displays around. For more information on this special event, including details on parking and free shuttle buses, please visit garnernc.gov.





Huff Named Public Works Employee of Year

Donna Huff was selected the Town of Garner Public Works Department Employee of the Year for 2014 and presented her award at a picnic held by the department in commemoration of National Public Works Week on May 21. She was selected by her colleagues after a nomination and election process.

Huff began working with the town full time as an office assistant in December 2000. Her position was reclassified in 2008 to her current title of administrative support specialist.

Huff has worked hard to improve her skills both on the job and through training. Since joining the Town, she has completed training in 17 continuing-education courses on various subjects including Microsoft Office, English grammar and Spanish. Huff served her coworkers for two years as a member and secretary of the Public Works Forum. This group brings suggestions and ideas forward in the department and improves communication between



Donna Huff and Public Works Director Paul Cox show off Huff's Employee of the Year plaque while standing by her special new parking spot at the Public Works complex.

management and staff.

She has been heavily involved in helping with the Town's solid-waste

contract proposals and the Town's conversion from approximately 7,800 recycling bins to 65-gallon carts several years ago. Her records are the basis of the Town's annual NCDENR Solid Waste Report to the state.

In Huff's nomination from her coworkers, these words were used to describe her: "Professional, caring, cooperative, knowledgeable, goes the extra mile, problem solver, dependable and courteous to everyone, does exceptional work, and [in a repeated theme] always willing to help anyone who needs it."

Along with a plaque recognizing her as Employee of the Year, Huff received an invitation for lunch with Town Manager Hardin Watkins, a fishing pass or shelter rental, a special parking spot at the Public Works complex and a work pass the day of the July 3 Independence Day celebration at Lake Benson Park, typically the busiest work day—and night—of the year for Public Works staff.

New Manager Takes Helm in Downtown Garner



You can follow downtown Garner on Twitter (@Downtown-Garner).

Mari Howe has been hired as downtown development manager, replacing John Hodges, who served in a similar role as executive director of the Garner Revitalization



Association (GRA) before being named assistant town manager-development services.

Howe, a Garner resident, has joined the Town's Economic Development Department and will manage the Garner Main Street Program, promote and facilitate implementation of the Historic Downtown Garner Plan, and serve as a staff liaison to, and executive director of, the GRA. She started in her new position on May 18.

The downtown development manager position was created as part of organizational changes that began last fall. Funding for the position was previously provided to GRA as part of its annual grant to support downtown development and manage the Garner Main Street Program. The position is now a part of the Town's Economic Development Department and will serve as a staff liaison to GRA. Funding to GRA is being reduced to offset the change.

Howe was selected through a staff-managed assessment-center-type process that included representation from Town administrative staff, peer staff, Town Council and the GRA Board of Directors.

Howe earned a master's degree

in city and regional planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a concentration in community and economic development. She has also completed coursework toward her certified economic developer designation through the International Economic Development Council.

Howe worked for five years with the Chatham County Economic Development Corporation as an entrepreneur resource specialist. In that position, she organized a regional entrepreneur initiative and created Chatham County's first youth business plan competition to engage student entrepreneurs. Most recently, she worked for the Small Business Technology and Development Center as a senior research analyst.